



State of Illinois
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This Thanksgiving, don't be a turkey: Buckle up and drive sober

Thanksgiving enforcement underway as motor vehicle crash fatalities rise

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police and local law enforcement agencies throughout the state are joining together to ensure you make it to the Thanksgiving table by stepping up efforts to keep impaired drivers off the roads and encourage seat belt use.

“It’s well known that Thanksgiving weekend is one of the busiest travel times of the year,” said Cynthia Watters, IDOT’s bureau chief of Safety Programs and Engineering. “Although more cars on the roads means the potential for more crashes, most are preventable. By making plans for a sober ride home before attending festivities as well as buckling up every trip, every time, you are helping to make yourself and everyone on the road safer.”

Whether it’s driving down the road to a friend’s house, across town to pick up a turkey or hundreds of miles to see a relative – your seat belt is your best defense in case of a crash. If you’re traveling with children, they are required to ride in a child safety seat until at least age 8 in Illinois. Children must remain in a rear-facing seat until age 2.

“Our troopers will be diligently enforcing traffic laws and pursuing criminality to ensure safe travel this holiday season so you can enjoy time with family and friends,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “Ensure everyone in the vehicle is buckled up, drive sober, keep your eyes on the road when behind the wheel, follow the speed limit and please move over for any vehicle with emergency lights activated on the road.”

As the end of 2021 nears, Illinois crash fatalities continue to rise, consistent with national trends. As of Nov. 12, there have been 1,090 fatalities compared to 1,029 on the same date in 2020, according to provisional data.

In an effort to save lives, law enforcement is redoubling its efforts over the Thanksgiving travel period. Through Sunday, motorists will see hundreds of additional seat belt enforcement zones and other patrols aimed at keeping Illinois roads safe.

The “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” and “Click It or Ticket” campaigns are funded by federal traffic safety funds administered by IDOT.

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